



**Minutes of the meeting of Board of Directors
GEMS LEARNING TRUST**

Wednesday 27th June 2018

Attendees	Role
Dr Harry Ziman (Chair)	Chair of Trust Board
Jodie Croft	CEO & Operations lead
Danielle West	GEMS Liaison
Leah Perring	Standards

Apologies	Role
Rony Valeny	Interim Finance, Audit and Risk lead
Joe Garrod (vice-Chair)	H&S
Teresa De Quincey	Education, SEND, Safeguarding and Child Protection lead

Item		Comments/Questions	Action
1	Apologies for absence and consent to absence	The Chair accepted the apologies and expressed disappointment that RV and JG were unable to attend.	
2	Declaration of pecuniary interest and updates to business register	No new pecuniary interests declared LP to be added to Business Interests Register pending appointment to the Board	JC to update Business Register
3	Review of Trust Board membership and DBS status Vote: appointment of new director, interim finance director	<p>The Chair noted his formal appreciation to the work of Andy Collings who sadly died earlier this year. Andy was charming, polite and totally professional and contributed an enormous amount to the trust.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the schools present an award in the name of Andy Collings to selected pupils on an annual basis in reflection of their whole school contribution</p> <p>All DBS checks are up to date. LP to present original document to JC</p> <p>HW has stepped down from the board due to increasing conflicts of interest between Didcot GLF school and DPA. The Chair would like to formally pass his thanks to HW.</p> <p>The Chair expressed the need of the board for a trustee who can provide an objective view of educational standards in GLT schools.</p> <p>DW asked if LP was conflicted. LP confirmed not.</p>	<p>JC to implement annual award with Principals</p> <p>LP to present original DBS to JC</p> <p>JC to seek new trustees for the board</p>

		<p>LP stepped out of the room for directors to vote.</p> <p>A vote was conducted and LP was co-opted to the board of Trustees. TDQ sent her 'yes' vote by proxy.</p> <p>RV has accepted interim Finance Trustee role.</p> <p>The Chair expressed the need to find a replacement trustee for the financial role.</p>	
4	Minutes of the last full board meeting and matters arising	The minutes were reviewed and approved	JC to remove TDQ as director of the GLT
5	Review of Directors training and development	<p>JC presented record of governors training and urged RV and DW to complete courses asap.</p> <p>LP to complete basic governance training courses</p> <p>The Chair asked LP to thank her school for releasing her for GLT board and standards meetings</p>	<p>RV and DW to complete training asap.</p> <p>LP to complete basic governance training courses</p>
6	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
7	CEO report – Finance, H&S, Trust growth and development, Compliance, 2017 Internal Audit Recommendations	<p>TPA – Outstanding judgement awarded by Ofsted. Substantially outstanding in every category Ongoing appeal with planning condition for acoustic fence – ESFA leading on behalf of TPA</p> <p>DPA – ongoing build issues unresolved, lack of communication about next steps from OCC Gaps below gates in fence need blocking up Additional funds requested to block fence, fence off the pond, develop the forest school and build and outdoor classroom</p> <p>HJZ asked if JC had approached councillors. JC confirmed not.</p> <p>KPA – three suitable sites identified in Surbiton. ESFA pursuing all three concurrently. Likely opening date 2021. The chair requested a business case before committing to a site.</p> <p>New business – new competition opened for new 2-11 primary school in Oxfordshire. TDQ and JC leading the bid</p> <p>DW and HJZ asked if we are well placed to bid and JC confirmed yes, believes OCC to be supportive of the growth the of the trust and pleased with working relationship</p>	<p>JC to consider enlisting support of local councillors to remedy building defects at DPA</p> <p>JC to produced business case for Surbiton site before committing to the opening.</p> <p>JC to set up shared drive for board papers</p>

		<p>TDQ and JC to meet RSC SW LON 3/7/18 to discuss growth plans</p> <p>JC proposed shared drive for governance documents with link installed on desktop. All agreed.</p>	
8	<p>Academies Financial Handbook and Academies Accounts Direction 2018 updates</p>	<p>The Trustees received the Academies Financial Handbook 2018 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2018.</p> <p>JC noted key changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management accounts must be seen by the Chair on a monthly basis and by all other trustees at least 6 times a year 2. Internal audit report must be sent to all trustees 3. Trustees to disclose any union duties and activities of employees in annual accounts 4. School funds must not be spent on alcohol 5. The costs and funds raised by school fundraising must be declared in the annual accounts 	<p>JC to upload management accounts to shared drive and alert trustees when done</p> <p>JC: Internal audit report review to be added to standing agenda of board meetings</p> <p>JC: Finance manual to be updated to reflect 4 and 5</p>
9	<p>Operations committee verbal report, recommendations to the board & questions on minutes</p>	<p>The Operations committee recommend that the board approve the annual budgets for TPA, DPA and GLT. One notable change to DPA – Additional £25k for outdoor development and £10k for indoor furniture replacement.</p> <p>HJZ asked what furniture needed replacing. JC confirmed that all pupil chairs are too small for the children despite being declared age appropriate by manufacturer. Also some furniture is not fit for purpose and has been poorly made.</p> <p>DW asked if DPA could sell chairs before purchasing new ones. HJZ agreed and suggested a maximum of £5k for furniture replacement without further information as to the cost of replacement or which items are affected. HJZ also noted that we must be wary of ending up with the financial legacy of the Carillion collapse at DPA so must be prudent with our reserves.</p> <p>The board approved the annual budgets for DPA, TPA and GLT</p> <p>Internal audit report.</p> <p>Purchase cards should be used as a last resort and statements must be signed every month.</p> <p>LP noted how challenging it is for schools when approved supplier prices are much higher than Amazon.</p>	<p>JC to further investigate why the bank statements do not reconcile.</p> <p>Annual confirmation from Principals that all staff receive GDPR induction training annually.</p>

		<p>HJZ requested pre-authorisation of all online purchases – signature of a print out of basket for all transactions, regardless of value. There should be no purchasing on personal cards or use of paypal. The limit of purchase cards can be extended to £1000 following this procedure.</p> <p>The CEO should sign the Principals purchase card statements</p> <p>JC to further investigate why the bank statements do not reconcile. HJZ noted there must be something wrong with the systems and we should expect the statement to match the system exactly.</p> <p>HJZ asked for TDQ to be added to bank account as back up for authorisation</p> <p>HJZ asked for unneeded TPA account to be closed</p> <p>HJZ asked JC to investigate processing expenses through payroll.</p> <p>JC asked whether DPA should have further reserves ringfenced and the board agreed to a total of £60k</p> <p>JC noted that the Operations Committee approved the change in standard working hours for support staff from 35 to 37 in line with agreed standard pay and conditions</p> <p>JC confirmed that all staff have had GDPR training and that all new staff will receive a GDPR induction when joining the school. HJZ asked for confirmation from Principals that all staff receive GDPR induction training annually.</p>	
10	<p>Chief Education Officer Report: progress, attainment, context dashboards, pupil surveys, Safeguarding, SCR & SEND, Standards committee verbal report and questions on minutes</p>	<p>TPA and DPA have had a very successful year. There are no concerns regarding quality of educational provision, safeguarding, health and safety compliance, attendance, staff, parents or financial management in either school. Pupil outcomes are a constant focus and each school is determined to improve pupil progress and attainment for all groups. The leadership and management of both schools is strong and effective and motivates staff, pupils and parents to work for outstanding results.</p> <p>TPA</p> <p>Leadership and Management</p> <p>The SEF has graded Leadership and Management accurately as Outstanding. The determination of JS and his staff to ensure excellent pupil outcomes is commendable. The GLT board has provided robust challenge in all areas. Attendance has improved from the last two years to above the national average this academic year which is impressive as it is an infant school which traditionally has more absence through sickness as children start at school. JS has robust measures in place to tackle any absence and persistent absence has been reduced.</p>	

All targets in leadership and management are well progressed and leadership and management is outstanding.

Quality of Teaching and Learning

Pupil outcomes in each year group meet or exceed the school targets and are expected to be significantly above local and national averages. Pupil outcomes are outstanding.

There is a high degree of consistency across Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 with excellent support and challenge for all staff, NQTs and teaching assistants. There is depth in the wider curriculum. Subject leadership development has started and will continue to be a major focus in further sharpening the content and challenge in the wider curriculum. The impact of using assessment of the wider curriculum in tailoring learning to further challenge higher ability children will support this aim.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

DPA

Leadership and Management

The Principal and leaders have completed a successful second year. All targets in leadership and management are well progressed and leadership and management is very good indeed.

Looking forward, with the expected results from this year, and the strength of middle leaders and the rich curriculum the SEF judgements may be adjusted for the coming academic year

Quality of Teaching and Learning and assessment

Current data suggests that all year groups will meet set targets which are in line with or exceed national averages. Expected pupil outcomes are very good indeed and the SEF judgement may need to be adjusted to reflect the improving picture.

AA and TDQ will look at pupil premium, SEN and EAL performance in detail for attainment and excellent progress over two years to evidence the evaluation judgement.

Nursery works closely with Reception to ensure robust teaching and readiness for school. The school will support timely and accurate assessment of Nursery. It will also focus on developing further the outside learning area, storage, clarity and opportunities.

The focus and leadership of teaching and learning is very good indeed.

Extra- curricular clubs and school trips DPA and TPA

Both schools have developed extensive opportunities for pupils after school. There is also a strong commitment to educational trips which enhance and inspire learning and pupil engagement.

Cross- school collaboration

There have been productive visits of staff to each school and cross school moderation of pupils' work. This leads to robust professional dialogue, reflection and dissemination of good practice. AA is the lead on this collaboration and it is expected that middle leaders liaise with each other and share their plans and ideas in the next academic year.

		<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The GLT can be very confident that the staff at TPA and DPA are continuing to offer an excellent academic and whole child education to the communities which they serve. Parents and pupils are very happy with the education on offer.</p> <p>The schools are fully staffed for September 2018 and SDPs and SEFs will be drafted before the end of term ready for a dynamic start to 2018-19 academic year. Didcot Primary will have an Ofsted inspection next academic year. Leaders will pass on all experiences and learning from Twickenham's Ofsted to support the best possible outcome for Didcot.</p> <p>TDQ would like to congratulate John for a highly effective and impressive first year of headship.</p> <p>Alison has supported the Trust well and has also had a highly effective and successful year, placing the school in a very strong position for inspection in 2018-19.</p> <p>Well done to our Principals.</p>	
11	Report on LAB minutes: any questions	<p>JC confirmed both LABS have developed and are asking insightful and challenging questions about standards and progress.</p> <p>HJZ noted a mismatch between expectations of GLT directors who attend and asked Principals to clarify that LABS are not dependent on board members.</p> <p>HJZ asked for a LAB report on their activities based on their scheme of delegations and requested that LABS add more members to strengthen their capacity</p>	Principals to request LABS report to the board on their activity in relation to the scheme of delegation and clarify role of GLT directors as observers not members of LABS
12	Proposed amendments admissions policies 2020/21 Proposal: To consult on giving priority to children of teachers who have been offered a permanent contract of employment at the school	<p>The board discuss the possibility of prioritising the children of staff over local children in GLT admissions policies.</p> <p>LP noted the challenges of teaching the children of colleagues and all agreed that the details would be problematic to determine – eg which staff, how long employed, employment conditions, how many children of staff etc</p> <p>The board dismissed the proposal.</p>	
13	Pay policy review	The pay policy has been updated to reflect latest pay scales and the board adopted the policy unless HR advisors make substantial revisions.	
14	Agree schedule for Trust Board and Committee business for the forthcoming year	<p>The board agreed the LAB remit to remain the same as well as the trust board, operations and standards committees.</p> <p>JC to add GDPR compliance to remit of Operations Committee</p>	JC to add GDPR compliance to remit of Operations Committee
15	Annual review of board, committee, LAB and Chairs performance	<p>JC noted how well the standards committee expels their duties and has the time to scrutinise the data on behalf of the board.</p> <p>JC asked all directors to complete and return a review of governance and Chair's performance asap</p>	All directors to complete and return self-review of governance and

			Chair's performance
16	Proposed 6 th Inset Day 2020/21	Both schools have proposed a 6 th inset day to co-ordinate trust-wide collaboration and cpd. JC confirmed schools need to offer 190 sessions per year regardless of the length of session. HJZ suggested early closing on a number of days could cover the time of a sixth inset day.	AA and JS to schedule additional inset time into 2020/21 calendars
17	Dates for 18/19 meetings	The dates were received and noted by the board	
18	Data Protection policy – for governor training and understanding	The board received the GDPR policy. LP and HZ confirmed they have received GDPR training. JC to send GDPR induction training pack to remaining board members.	JC to send GDPR induction training pack to remaining board members
19	AOB	None	
20	AOB confidential	None	